Reduction of levy and customs duty on petroleum products

217. SHRI DARA SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether he has suggested any package to the Minister of Finance pertaining to budgetary allocations this year pertaining to petroleum products with a view to reduce levy on crude;

(b) whether Government propose to cut customs duty from 7.5 per cent at present to 2.5 per cent on petrol and diesel; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) to (c) The Union Budget proposals for the year 2007-08 are under the consideration of the Government.

Consumption of LPG in Uttarakhand

†218. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the proportion of the population using LPG in various parts of the country;

(b) whether any special measures are being taken by his Ministry to raise its utilization;

(c) whether it is a fact that the supply of LPG is being hindered in the hilly areas of Uttarakhand for last few months; and

(d) the measures being taken to increase the consumption of LPG in Uttarakhand, a very sensitive State from the environmental view point, for safeguarding the forests?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) and (b) As on 01.01.2007, Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) were operating 9344 LPG distributorships in the country. Through these distributorships, OMCs are serving about 932 lakh LPG customers covering 48.02% population in the country.

Government have given freedom to OMCs to set up LPG distributorships in accordance with their commercial assessment and locations are identified by them on the basis of available refill sale potential for sustaining an

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.